

Wives on Board

*W*e've all heard of wives joining their husbands on board... but not everyone tells you that it's so much more than just a vacation... and how! Being a seafarer wife is a full time job and being on board is the bonus... meant to splurge in!

ST presents two seafarer wives at different stages of lives, showing us how to have the time of your life on board - now and then! Women take notes!

Now - THEN...

VIPIN MOHAN
(W/O Capt. S. K. Mohan,
Wallem Shipmanagement)

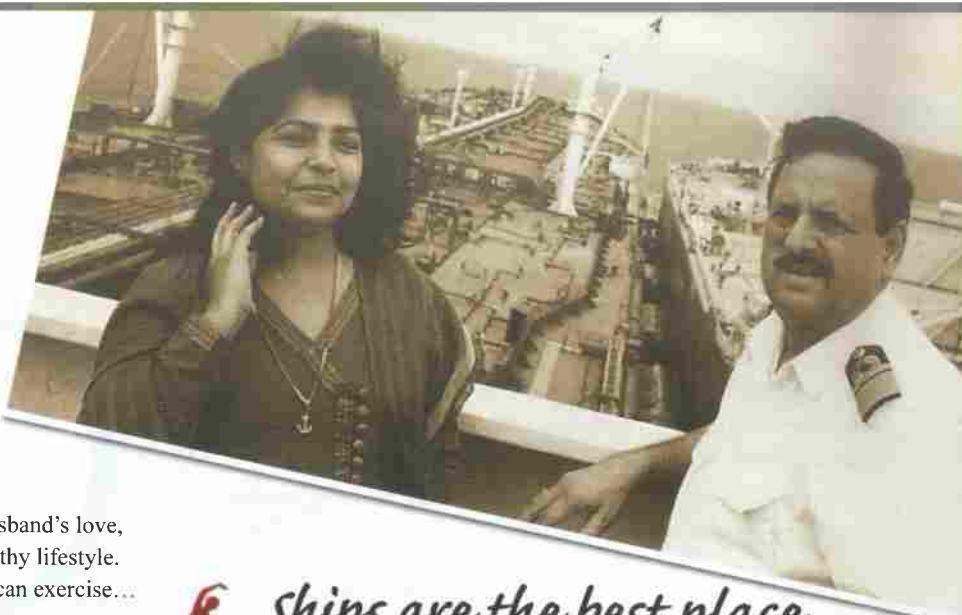
Married for 33 years with 2 sons, I am proud to say that I have been sailing with my husband for the past 15-16 yrs! The first time I sailed was back in 1976, just after I got married. Like most seafarer wives are, I was very excited to go on the ship but was disappointed to see the water so calm. I was expecting some adventure like a rough sea, bad weather and a storm or something. But later when we were sailing in a container ship of Maersk once, the sea was indeed very rough... besides being sea sick... since I had conceived... morning sickness got the worst of me. But still, from the time I got married till I had my kids, I sailed for about 4-5 years in a row. Only when my kids were to go to school did I start staying back home longer. **There's something about being on board that makes me want to go back each time I return...**

 *Feel like a queen on board...*

When asked why I travel on board so often, I say "where else can I live such a comfortable life!!" You are treated like royalty on board... there's someone to cook for you... serve you... and cleans after you are done. Back home you are busy doing all these things yourself. Least, here you don't have to worry about grocery shopping!

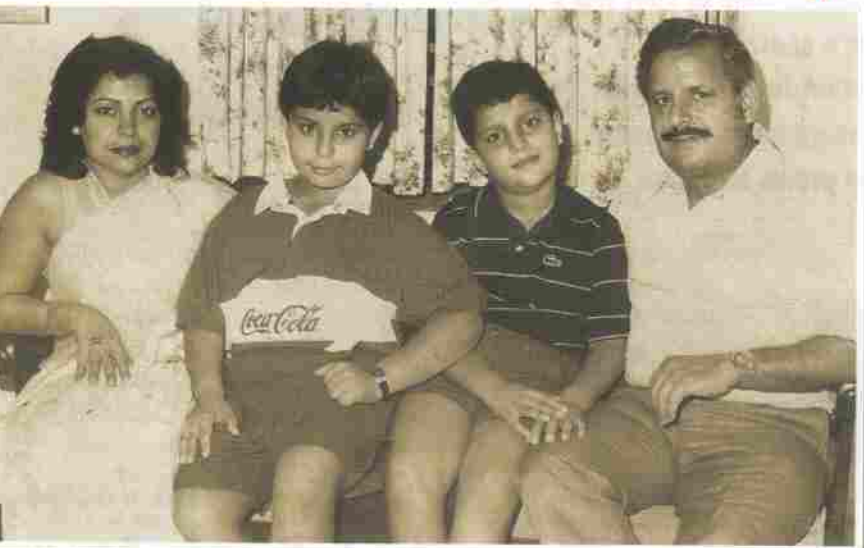
My skin glows when I stay on board. Of course it's my husband's love, because we're together, but it's mainly because of the healthy lifestyle. You eat on time... you breath fresh air all the time... you can exercise... and most of all you have time to rest.


Where else can you see beautiful sunsets and sunrises everyday? Every night is a starlit night on the ships...



ships are the best place for kids...

Even after my children were born I continued to bring them on ship. Most people think twice before taking their kids on board, but the truth is that it's the best place for them to be. Kids don't fall sick on board. The food is healthy, they breathe fresh air and plus learn so much! My kids learnt good manners on board. They observe so much like even learn the mechanism behind how ship equipment work! Besides, since there is crew from different countries, they grasp different languages. After my kids were born I taught them on board for 2 years and they directly got in First Grade! The ship was and will always be like home to me and whenever we anchored on a port, it was vacation time for us!!



 *Career doesn't seem worth it, on board...*

It is great for a woman to have a successful career but what matters in the end is that if you are happy and healthy! Besides, it is next to impossible to maintain a full time career along with being a seafarer wife. There are so many responsibilities on you and it's just not possible to do justice to your career. I am a gold medalist in B.Ed, Msc, but I didn't go ahead and get a job; I chose to lead a happier and a more comfortable life just travelling with my husband and looking after my family. In the end money is everything and there's plenty in the life of a seafarer, then it's best that you sit back and enjoy your life. I am proud to be the wife of a seafarer who works so hard, and am glad to give up a career to be his 'better' half. And if one thinks they need to have a career to be busy, let me tell you there's no time to get bored!! There are plenty of activities to engage in, on board that can keep you busy all day. Helping the crew in their work is one thing... I always made sure that I cook at least one dish everyday... organizing parties and events on board. Wives who are good with computers used to sometimes help the crew. There are wives that run yoga sessions onboard for the crew. Of course, I am lucky to have two sons, both of whom freed me from my responsibilities, as they went their way early in life and once again gave me time to enjoy my life on board...



Love Grows with distance

It's a different feeling for husbands to have their wives on board... the feeling that someone is waiting for them back in the cabin. After a tiring day at work when they come to their cabin, they just want to talk with their wives and play with their kids. It helps them emotionally and recharges them immediately.

I have observed over the years that men with their wives on board are happier and perform better at their duties.

Message to seafarer wives

Sail as much as you can, WHILE YOU CAN. Once you have kids, things get even more complicated. You can have the most marvelous time of your life on board and I strongly feel that your life as a seafarer wife is incomplete if you don't sail with him. It is important to do so in order to understand your husband better. Staying on board helps you come closer to each other and your relationship grows stronger.

HE - NOW

REBECCA JOSEPH
(W/O Mr. Alister Joseph
Anglo-Eastern Ship
Management)

It is hard to define the feeling you get when your husband leaves for a ship after you get married, and joining him on board is the only thing that plays on your mind... We got married in 2006 and very soon I decided to join my husband on board, sailing with him for almost a year aboard a container vessel. Initially, we had decided that I would join him for one contract after marriage. **But I soon realised that I enjoyed sailing with him and today, I plan to sail along with him for a few years more...**



As Ms. F
society
upto

Finding my home, on board...

Initially I was a bit lonely as I found the ship too quiet and hardly ventured out of the four walls of my room alone. The only place I did go was to the Officer's smoke room to get a book to read; the ship had a good selection of books. My husband tried getting me to use the gym but I was afraid to walk five floors down to the gym alone. But after 2 months of sitting in my room I realized that it was indeed time to leave the room. So gradually I started using the gym in the afternoons, reading my novels in the smoke room instead of our room and spending time in the kitchen talking to the Chief cook and watching him prepare the meals. That's when I started enjoying my sailing experience.



Being there for him... means a lot to a seafarer husband

I find that when I am on board with him, he is less stressed. He is happy to have me on board and I realised, he sleeps more too! I remember the few months I didn't sail with him on his second contract; he hardly slept and called ever so often. I have realized that I do so much just by being there for him. I'm there to comfort him if he has had a bad day at work... I am there to talk to him about work... even if I don't really understand his job, I still encourage him to tell me how his day was and what he did at work every day!

As of now it is just my husband and I, so we can afford me to sail with him. But even once our family expands I plan to sail with him till it is possible to do so. I'm glad I joined my husband on ship as we have got to spend our initial years of marriage together which will never return...



Before getting married I didn't think that it was essential for the wife to accompany her husband on board, but after I have sailed with my husband I realized it that is a necessity! We are lucky that the company allows us wives to join our husbands and we should take advantage of that opportunity for as long as we can. Initially I had planned to get a job after one year of marriage, but now I have given up the very idea. In a marriage there are two people involved, and if both want their way it becomes difficult for the relationship to nurture. So today I don't feel bad by saying that one partner has to take a back seat and just enjoy the ride, and that's what I plan to do!!

**Message to
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